

**U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey**

**National Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council
Charter**

1. **Committee's Official Designation.** The official designation of the committee is the National Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council (NEPEC).
2. **Authority.** The NEPEC is established under the Earthquake Hazards Reduction Authorization Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. § 7701), as amended, and is regulated by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. Appendix 2.
3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The NEPEC provides advice and recommendations to the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) on earthquake predictions and related scientific research, in support of the Director's delegated responsibility under the Stafford Act (Public Law 93-288) to issue timely warnings of potential geologic disasters.
4. **Description of Duties.** The NEPEC's duties and responsibilities are solely advisory in support of the Director's delegated responsibility to issue timely warnings of potential geologic disasters. At the conclusion of each meeting or shortly thereafter, provide a detailed recommendation report, including meeting minutes, to the Designated Federal Officer (DFO).
5. **Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports.** The NEPEC reports to the Director of the USGS through the DFO.
6. **Support.** Administrative, technical, and funding support for the NEPEC will be provided by the USGS Earthquake Hazards Program.
7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The annual operating costs associated with supporting the NEPEC's functions are estimated to be \$50,000, including all direct and indirect expenses and .20 Federal staff years support.
8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The DFO is the Associate Coordinator for the Earthquake Hazards Program who is a full time Federal employee appointed in accordance with Agency procedures. The DFO will approve or call all NEPEC and subcommittee meetings, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all NEPEC and subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the Secretary.

9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The NEPEC will meet approximately one time annually, and at such other times as designated by the DFO. The NEPEC may be required to meet on short notice to address an urgent situation regarding an earthquake prediction or other earthquake emergency. As stated in Public Law 96-472, the NEPEC shall be exempt from the notification requirement of the FACA when meeting on an urgent matter.
10. **Duration.** Continuing.
11. **Termination.** The NEPEC will be inactive 2 years from the date the charter is filed, unless, prior to that date, it is renewed in accordance with the provisions of section 14 of the FACA. The NEPEC will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.
12. **Membership and Designation.** The Director of the USGS shall appoint all members of the NEPEC. All members shall be experts in the scientific disciplines that bear on earthquake prediction or other relevant disciplines involved in forecasting natural hazards or public response to such forecasts.

All members serve at the discretion of the Director and shall, with the exception of travel and per diem for official travel, serve without compensation. The NEPEC shall comprise not fewer than 8 or more than 12 members. The members may be Federal employees, but this number must comprise less than one-half of the total number of members of the NEPEC. Non-Federal members shall serve as Special Government Employees. The term for each member of the NEPEC shall be 3 years, except for the ex officio member.

The Director shall appoint a Chair from among the members of the NEPEC. The Chair shall not be a USGS employee and shall also serve ex officio as a member of the Scientific Earthquake Studies Advisory Committee.

The USGS Coordinator for the Earthquake Hazards Program shall serve ex officio as Vice Chair of the NEPEC.

13. **Ethics Responsibilities of Members.** No NEPEC or subcommittee member will participate in any NEPEC or subcommittee deliberations or votes relating to a specific party matter before the Department or its bureaus and offices including a lease, license, permit, contract, grant, claim, agreement, or litigation related thereto.

In addition, the Department of the Interior will provide materials to members appointed as Special Government employees. Consistent with the ethics requirements, members will endeavor to avoid any actions that would cause the public to question the integrity of the NEPEC's operations, activities, or advice. The provisions of this paragraph do not affect any other statutory or regulatory ethical obligations to which a member may be subject.

14. **Subcommittees.** Subject to the DFO's approval, subcommittees may be formed for the purposes of compiling information or conducting research. However, such subcommittees must act only under the direction of the DFO and must report their recommendations to the full NEPEC for consideration. Subcommittees must not provide advice or work products directly to the Department. Subcommittees will meet as necessary to accomplish their assignments, subject to the approval of the DFO and the availability of resources.
15. **Recordkeeping.** The records of the NEPEC, and formally or informally established subcommittees of the NEPEC, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2 and other approved Agency records disposition schedules. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).



Deputy Director
Exercising the Authority of the Director of the
U.S. Geological Survey

4/27/18

Date

APR 30 2018

Date Filed